

Notes & Comment

Dictionary of New Zealand Biography

W. H. Oliver (Editor, *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*) writes:

At least for the next six years, and probably for quite a few more, librarians will find that they are getting requests for help from people associated with the *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*. Some librarians are, in fact, already involved with the project. Many Working Parties, both regional and professional, include librarians from public, university and other libraries; the National Librarian is represented on the DNZB Policy Committee by Mr J. E. Traue, Chief Librarian at the Turnbull.

It is easy to see why this should be so — from the smallest local libraries to the major national collections, libraries are storehouses of historical information, and librarians are the people who know what is in them. This brief note is a way of giving them some background information, and of thanking them for the help they have already given and, it is hoped, will continue to give.

The publication of the Dictionary will begin in 1990. It is an official Sesquicentennial project, financed by the Lottery Fund Board and the Department of Internal Affairs, and serviced by that Department. We plan to publish two volumes in that year — both covering the period from the late 18th to the late 19th century. One will contain all entries for that period — between 500 and 600 of them, ranging in length from 500 to 5000 words. The other will contain only Maori entries in the Maori language — these entries will also appear in English in the larger volume. Volumes to be published subsequently will cover the pre-contact period, and the period from the later 19th century to about 1980.

To get to the publication of these two volumes in six years will not be easy — in both Australia and Canada it took longer to make a start, with a larger staff. The scope and nature of the project is not always appreciated; sometimes even well-informed people assume that six years is plenty of time. And we get very tired of hearing the Dictionary referred to as the 'New Zealand Bibliography', and even, once, as the 'New Zealand Biology'. Librarians, of course, would know better.

Without a great deal of voluntary help the task would be quite impossible. As many as twenty Working Parties are now in existence, most of them regional in scope, and others attending to special fields — religion, armed services and police, labour,

science, the Pacific. This network is now in being, and has begun to work. We hope, through these groups, to give the Dictionary a broad social base. Close to 3000 forms have been distributed to Working Parties through which they can make nominations and supply essential data. In this way people with specialised knowledge will help to form the database from which a preliminary selection of names for successive volumes will be made, and supply information which will be checked and expanded by further research.

At the same time, the preliminary steps have been taken to set up a Maori network; this should be in place next year. And before long we will be coping with another major historical problem: how to secure an adequate representation of women. For though a biographical dictionary must have an elitist character, we are determined not to be overwhelmed by politicians and runholders. The important people will be there; but so too will be a number of representative figures, and as many as we can find of the colourful and the unusual.

Of course, not all the nominations will find their way into the published volumes. But all names and information will be stored, both on paper and on a computing system. Thus the database should evolve into a permanent biographical archive for research. This is one way in which we hope to make some return for all the voluntary assistance we are receiving.

Over the next few months DNZB searchers will become familiar figures in many libraries over the whole of New Zealand, as well as in museums and other places where books, newspapers, and archives are kept. We will be grateful for the help librarians can give them — and we will also welcome ideas and information from librarians. Soon we will begin publishing a newsletter; please write to the Secretary, DNZB, Internal Affairs, Private Bag, Wellington, for a copy.

Bibliography of New Zealand music

Dorothy Freed (President, I.A.M.L., N.Z. Branch) writes:

Elsewhere in this issue will be found a review by Ross Harvey of Deborah Crisp's *Bibliography of Australian Music*. This work, the first of its kind to appear in Australia, has interested the committee of the New Zealand Branch of the International Association of Music Libraries. The publication of a

similar bibliography about New Zealand music and musicians seems highly desirable, to complement the valuable work of the Archive of New Zealand Music at the Alexander Turnbull Library and to provide necessary information for the courses in New Zealand music now being taught in most universities. An eminently suitable compiler has offered his services to the Branch and the executive has been successful in soliciting finance for the project from the Stout Trust, the Alexander Turnbull Library Endowment Trust and the Trustees of the National Library.

Librarians who know of existing collections of relevant material on local music and musicians are asked to inform the Secretary, I.A.M.L. (N.Z. Branch), at the Archive of New Zealand Music, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.

A social science research information system

J. E. Whitcombe (Secretary, Social Sciences Committee, National Research Advisory Council) writes:

The Social Sciences Committee of the National Research Advisory Council (NRAC) has been aware of the lack of a coherent system for listing and cataloguing New Zealand social science research. The Committee has promoted the development of a New Zealand system which will bring together into one comprehensive collection publications, articles, research results and conference papers in the social sciences.

A feasibility study was conducted for NRAC in 1982 and published in 1983. This suggested that for reasons of cost and expediency it would be desirable to 'piggy-back' a social science system to an existing system. The Social Sciences Committee decided that the DSIR's SIRIS system was the most compatible with the listing requirements of the social sciences. The DSIR, when approached, were agreeable to establishing a sister file and offered to 'host' the system as their contribution. They could not, however, make any staff positions available. Government departments who are likely to use the system have been approached to provide funding on a shared basis.

A Technical Advisory Committee has been established to deal with such matters as defining what to include in the system and developing a classification system. With the appointment (on contract) of staff to develop the system, input will proceed initially with 1984

material but retrospective listing will take place as soon as the current material has been dealt with. Contact with government departments' research staff and librarians will ensure that user requirements are taken into account. Once access channels are established it is planned to include universities in the network and eventually all libraries on NZBN but this will take time. The installation of the Post Office packet-switching network will enable registered users to have dial-in access anywhere in New Zealand on a relatively cheap basis. At the present time there are many matters to be resolved: access charges, management of the system, frequency of hard copy production (annually at first) and the cost of this, registration of users, and responsibility for the preparation of material for inclusion.

The National Research Advisory Council is satisfied that there is sufficient interest and user demand to proceed with the establishment of the system and the position of Liaison Officer/Co-ordinator has been advertised. It is expected that by mid-1985 the information base will be sufficiently established to be available to registered users.

Compilers as authors or editors? A note for cataloguers

Kathy Boyes (School of Library Studies, Wellington Teachers College) writes:

The term 'compiler' (or 'compiled by') is used by publishers to indicate three distinguishably different functions. Standard library science glossaries tend to provide definitions which ignore this fact of publishing life and reflect instead a librarian's view of what a compiler *should* do. Even AACR2's definition of a 'compiler' (Glossary, p.565) does not really cover its own usage of the word as applied to authors of bibliographies in 21.1A1. These persons do not 'select' and 'put together' 'matter from the works of various persons or bodies' (my italics).

A much truer picture is provided by *Webster's Dictionary*, which indicates three basic meanings of the verb 'to compile':

1. to collect and assemble (written material or items from various sources) into a document or volume ...
2. *obsolete*: to compose as an original literary work.
3. (a): to put together (e.g. a word may be compiled from two sources or other words).
(b): to pile up: list, enumerate (e.g. to compile 'a great majority of votes').

If we accept that usage 2 is obsolete, we could perhaps divide modern publishers' usage of 'compiler' and 'compiled

by' into three categories, of which the first two, though resulting in AACR2 in two diametrically opposed main entry rules, derive from *Webster's* first category. The third category derives from *Webster's* third.

1. *Compiler as editor*. This case arises with works such as encyclopedias, dictionaries, collections, etc., where the person named as compiler has 'collected' but not reshaped material from various sources into a document or volume. Such a person chooses the material to be included and often writes an introduction, but does not reshape the material so as to present a personal viewpoint. If the material has been published before, the work is what technically AACR2 defines as a 'collection' ('two or more independent works or parts of works published together and not written for the same occasion or for the publication in hand', Glossary, p.564). If the compiler has used other people as 'sources', getting them to write new contributions for the work, then technically it is just a 'work produced under editorial direction'. In both these cases, AACR2 prescribes main entry under title; the 'compiler' is treated as an editor, and given an added entry (rule 21.7). With encyclopedias and large dictionaries the situation can actually be more complex, as there may be a staff of people who perform function (2) below, rewriting the material from various sources into short articles or entries; and these people are responsible to an 'overseer' (the compiler) who performs function (1), choosing these people to do the research and assigning them particular subjects. The research staff are the 'authors', then, but as they work *under the direction of an editor*, author main entry does not arise: AACR2 21.6A instructs us not to apply the rules for shared responsibility to such works. Rule 21.7 applies again, and the compiler is treated as the editor, with main entry under title.

2. *Compiler as author (histories, etc.)*. This second category also derives from *Webster's* first, as the compiler of works such as histories again has 'collected' material from various sources into a document or volume; but this time the 'compiler' has reshaped the material. The person who 'compiles' a history typically goes to many sources, whether primary (unpublished documents) or secondary (published items), takes what is relevant and reshapes it so as to express his or her own picture of the historical event(s). It is this reshaping or personal viewpoint which qualifies such a compiler for treatment as a personal author in AACR2, 'the person chiefly responsible for the creation of the intellectual ... content of the work' (21.1A1). AACR2 gives no indication that such a person may well be called a

'compiler' on the chief source of information. Rule 21.4A applies: main entry under the compiler's name.

3. *Compiler as author (bibliographies, etc.)*. AACR2 does tell us that 'compilers of bibliographies are the authors of those bibliographies' (21.1A1) but, as we have seen, its definition of a compiler does nothing to clarify the point at issue. In fact compilers of bibliographies fall into a wider category of persons named as compilers on their works: such persons have put together material into some sort of listing. Here the compiler's function is much closer to that described in *Webster's* 3(a) and (b) than to the traditional library science definitions. The compiler of a bibliography may well go to various printed sources but can hardly be said to select matter from those works (apart, that is, from selecting entries from other bibliographies); rather, the compiler will tend to choose the items to list by actually finding them as physical items and looking at their content. Because the final 'list' represents the compiler's personal choice (and therefore opinion), the work of a bibliographer is deemed by AACR2 to be closer to that of the compiler of a history than to that of the compiler of a collection, encyclopedia, etc., even if the bibliography does not include annotations. Again, rule 21.4A applies. It is important to note that, although AACR2 gives no indication of this, bibliographies are not in fact the only representatives of this category: many other works published in some systematic format comparable to a list also refer to their authors as 'compilers'. When such a work is not produced under editorial direction and does not fall within the scope of AACR2's definition of a collection, the cataloguer should treat the 'compiler' simply as an author.

Although dictionaries and encyclopedias were cited as examples in category (1) above, it is important to note that a person named as the 'compiler' of such a work may not necessarily have performed the function of an editor. It is quite possible (particularly in the case of smaller bilingual dictionaries or small encyclopedias) that a person so named may in fact have performed the function described in category 3 (or perhaps an amalgam of 2 and 3). That is, the 'compiler' of such a work may have organised the facts presented into a systematic list. Such facts may or may not have been gleaned from other sources (as in category 2). We cannot, then, simply look at the chief source of information of a dictionary or encyclopedia and say, 'It has a compiler, so main entry must be under title.' Instead, we must first decide which of the three types of 'compiling' is actually involved. Most 'compilers' of dictionaries and encyclopedias are in fact editors, but some are really authors.